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The Treasury Board of Canada

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The Treasury Board of Canada

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The Treasury Board was first established as a committee of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and was made a statutory committee in 1869. The Government Organization Act of 1966 established the Board Secretariat as a separate department of the Government with its own Minister, the President of the Treasury Board.

The committee constituting the Treasury Board includes, in addition to the President, the Minister of Finance and four other Privy Councilors. The Treasury Board Secretariat and the Office of the Comptroller General are the administrative arms of the Board. The position of Comptroller General was created in 1978; the holder of that office, like the Secretary of the Treasury Board, is a deputy head directly responsible to the President. The 1977-78 budget was estimated at \$377,157,000. Of this amount, \$80,759,000 constituted the Government's employer contributions to employee-benefit plans.

The staff of the Treasury Board Secretariat is divided among the four branches described below.

Program Branch

The Program Branch is responsible for the analysis of departmental plans, programs and organizational proposals with a view to recommending to Treasury Board the acceptance or modification of proposals in accordance with the financial and other priorities of the Government. It is responsible for developing the estimates, reflecting the expenditure decisions of the Government, for the approval of Parliament.

The estimates for any one fiscal year are determined in the light of a review of departmental "program forecasts". This review takes place each year over a period of about three months in the spring and early summer and culminates in the approval by the Government of an expenditure plan for the coming fiscal year. In the autumn, this plan is used by departments and agencies as the basis for the preparation of their main estimates submissions. These submissions are reviewed by the Board and submitted to the Government for final approval in December. When they have been approved, the

main estimates are printed and tabled in Parliament, usually in early or mid-February.

The main estimates of each department are referred for consideration to the appropriate standing committee of the House of Commons on or before March 1. These items are considered by the committees and reported back to the House. An appropriation act is introduced and, on its approval by Parliament, royal assent is given and the expenditures included in the act may be made.

Under the present Standing Orders of Parliament, the fiscal year is divided into three supply periods. At the end of each period, the Speaker is required to dispose of any item of business relating to the estimates then before the House of Commons. The main estimates are usually approved during the period ending not later than June 30.

Besides the expenditure items included in the annual appropriation acts, there are a number of items, such as interest on the public debt, family allowances and old-age assistance payments, that have been authorized under the provisions of other statutes.

The need for supplementary estimates may be created by unforeseen items. These supplementary require-

ments are reviewed by the Board and recommended to the Cabinet for approval. All supplementary estimates must be approved by Parliament.

Personnel Policy Branch

The role of the Personnel Policy Branch is to develop and ensure the application of personnel-management policies in order that the human resources needed to carry out programs effectively are determined, obtained at competitive rates of pay, and developed and used efficiently with due regard for the individual and collective rights of employees.

In fulfilment of its role, the branch has primary responsibility for: the development of personnel-management policies, programs, standards and systems in the areas of manpower determination and use; training and development requirements; the classification of positions and employees; determination and regulation of the pay of public servants; provision of awards for outstanding performance; the establishment of standards of discipline; the application of standards governing physical working conditions and the health and safety of employees; the negotiation and administration of collective agreements; pensions and insurance plans and evaluation, analysis and data services in support of the above.

Administrative Policy Branch

The role of the Administrative Policy Branch is to develop for Treasury Board approval, and to promulgate, the policies that govern administration, including real-property management within the Public Service; to monitor their implementation by the ministries, departments and agencies to which they apply; to interpret their applicability as may be necessary; to evaluate them and sustain their relevance in the light of changing conditions, and to make recommendations to the Treasury Board on submissions referred to it in accordance with statutes, regulations, policies and guidelines. This branch is also responsible for the administration of the Incentive Award Board of the Public Service.

The purpose of these policies is to ensure that probity and prudence in the acquisition and consumption of administrative "inputs" prevails throughout the Public Service so that the expenditure of money and matériel thereon in support of departmental programs is, and can be shown to be, efficient and effective. The principle that management shall be accountable for its actions is applied as fully as possible.

In fulfilment of its role, this branch provides the Treasury Board with the staff support the Board needs for the exercise of its mandate to provide

central direction in the administration of the Public Service. The manner in which this direction is given varies from the issue of permissive guidelines to the issue of mandatory regulations and directives that govern departmental actions.

Whatever the means employed, the decision to issue central direction is made within a consistent and rational framework.

Official Languages Branch

The Official Languages Branch is responsible for planning, developing and ensuring the implementation and the communication of the Federal Government's official languages policies and programs as they pertain to the Public Service of Canada. It monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of the application of these policies and programs and promotes the development of the Official Languages Act within the Public Service. It is also responsible for providing advice to departments and agency corporations on matters related to official languages policy and programs.

Office of the Comptroller General

The Office of the Comptroller General includes two branches.

Efficiency Evaluation Branch

The role of the Efficiency Evaluation Branch is the improvement of managerial decision-making processes through the promotion of better-quality information regarding the operating performance and effectiveness of Government programs. This role is addressed by the development and promulgation of policies concerning the measurement of program performance in departments and by the provision of guidance to departmental managers on applying these policies to specific programs. The branch reviews the application of related policies within departments and agencies, and also performs a broad liaison and co-ordination function with regard to federal program-performance measurement and evaluation.

This branch undertakes special surveys and studies on aspects of program evaluation — for example, the service level of Government programs to the public. The activities of the branch are closely co-ordinated with those of the program-planning and “program-resourcing” processes.

Financial Administration Branch

The Financial Administration Branch is responsible for all financial-administrative policy of the Government of Canada and for the following Government-wide functions:

- the development and evaluation of financial administration policies;
- the development and evaluation of internal audit policies and standards;
- the development and maintenance of the accounting principles and standards that are used for the accounts of Canada and in the preparation of the public and national accounts;
- the development and evaluation of principles and guidelines for financial systems designs;
- the co-ordination and preparation of the Government’s response to the Auditor General’s annual report and the presentation of this response to the Public Accounts Committee;

- provision of a central advisory service to departments and agencies concerning financial and accounting policies and principles, together with provision of uniform authoritative interpretations of financial-administrative legislation, policies and guidelines;
- the development and maintenance, in conjunction with the Public Service Commission, of professional training programs for financial officers in the federal Public Service.



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